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ABSTRACT

The articles in this issue dealing with school safety discusses what rural and small urban settings are doing to prevent violence and to educate young people about prosocial alternatives to violence. The research is quite clear that female, minority, and gay students are the targets of a disproportionate amount of harassment and violence, both in and out of school. A data-driven program, as recommended by the Principles of Effectiveness, would suggest that violence-prevention programs should pay special attention to the needs of these students. Kent Peterson points out in his article that school safety entails more than the absence of violence. Schools and classrooms should be places where students are safe to take intellectual risks, where students can make and learn from their mistakes, and where they treat one another respectfully. An article by Anne Turnbaugh Lockwood entails an interview with Harvard professor and violence-prevention expert, Deborah Prothrow-Stith, who shows how violence is also a major health issue for today's young people. A special insert entitled "Violence Prevention/Reduction Resources" provides a range of Web sites and resource links found on the World Wide Web that offers guidance to what schools, communities, teachers, parents, and kids can do together regarding violence prevention. (Contains 17 references.) (DFR)

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COMPREHENSIVE CENTER REGION-VI

[school safety]

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

AS THE FATHER OF TWO SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN, I HAVE A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE ISSUE OF SCHOOL SAFETY. AFTER ONE SCHOOL-YARD SHOOTING LAST YEAR, MY OLDER SON ASKED: "WHAT'S WRONG WITH TODAY'S KIDS?" THE ANSWER MAY BE THAT THEY ARE NO DIFFERENT THAN KIDS IN YEARS GONE PAST BUT THAT WHAT IS DIFFERENT IS THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN ARE GROWING UP. WHILE VIOLENCE HAS BEEN PART AND PARCEL OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE SINCE THE ADVENT OF THE COMMON SCHOOL, CHILDREN RECEIVE SOPHISTICATED MESSAGES THAT VIOLENCE IS THE "NORMAL" AND EVEN PRAISEWORTHY RESPONSE TO EVERYDAY FRUSTRATION THROUGH MEDIA WHOSE REACH EXTENDS BEYOND THAT OF ANY PREVIOUS TIME IN THE NATION'S HISTORY. INDEED, THE PERVASIVENESS OF VIOLENCE IS SO THOROUGH THAT I HAVE HEARD PEOPLE USE THE SURREAL PHRASE: "COMBATING" VIOLENCE.

Children also have access to a broader range of weaponry, and moreover, the havoc wreaked by those weapons is greater than at any other time in our history. These two facts provide a strong rationale for policies such as zero-tolerance for weapons in schools with the resultant suspension and/or expulsion of any student caught bringing weapons into the school. While such policies have unintended consequences when applied in an overly rigid or seemingly biased manner, they also should be just one of the tools that any school should consider in promoting school safety.

The roots of violence lie outside the school walls. Because of this, some would argue that there is nothing schools can do about violence. We disagree with such a position. Violence may be a social problem but schools are a social agency whose mission is education. Schools should address the root causes of violence through education and in partnership with other agencies. We highlight both kinds of efforts in this issue of the newsletter.

Stereotypes have it that violence is the unique problem of the nation's large urban schools. Our articles contradict this myth by featuring what rural and small urban settings are doing to prevent violence and to educate young people about prosocial alternatives to violence.

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SCHOOLS AS SAFE HAVENS: DEBORAH PROTHROW-STITH

[anne turnbaugh lockwood]

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DEBORAH PROTHROW-STITH, M.D., TRACES HER INTEREST IN ADOLESCENT VIOLENCE TO HER WORK AS A STAFF PHYSICIAN AT THE BOSTON CITY HOSPITAL AND THE HARVARD STREET NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTER. CURRENTLY ASSISTANT DEAN FOR GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY'S SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE FOR THE HARVARD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, SHE WAS STATE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN MASSACHUSETTS FROM 1987-89. IN THE LATTER CAPACITY, SHE ESTABLISHED THE FIRST STATE OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND EXPANDED TREATMENT PROGRAMS ON AIDS, DRUG REHABILITATION, AND OTHER URBAN HEALTH ISSUES. AUTHOR OF THE FIRST VIOLENCE PREVENTION CURRICULUM FOR SCHOOLS, SHE IS ALSO THE AUTHOR OF *DEADLY CONSEQUENCES*, WHICH PRESENTS A PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVE ON VIOLENCE TO A MASS AUDIENCE.

Meanness of character is one powerful reason the United States has become a violent society, Deborah Prothrow-Stith believes, coupled with a synergism of abundant influences steered by the profit motive. Manufacturers prosper from the sales of guns, video games, and movies that are targeted to children and actively promote and celebrate violence. A uniform—and disturbing—image that such manufacturers put forward is that of the hero as a figure who reacts quickly and violently, is deprived of a conscience, and is motivated solely by his own interests.

How have we, as a society, reached the point where children and teachers are afraid to go to school, where violence and crime are no longer solely urban problems? I ask Prothrow-Stith.

"I use the metaphor of a slot machine to explain our current infatuation with violence," she replies. "Unless you get five oranges, you don't hit the jackpot. In the windows of the slot machine, put up the widening gap of poverty we have experienced over the past 12-14 years; the crack epidemic, alcohol use and other drugs; the availability of guns; the big money that gun manufacturers have made in this country; the socio-cultural issues, which are probably the most devastating; and it is clear that there is no jackpot. Instead, in every window of the slot machine we see how mean we have gotten as a society and how popular it has become to be mean."

THE MARKETING OF MEANNESS

It is easy to enter the arena of violent behavior, she insists. "Being mean didn't become popular because it was natural," she points out. "Meanness has been promoted and sold in a very deliberate fashion; 'mean' as a state of being has been marketed carefully."

In her work on public health and violence prevention, Prothrow-Stith travels widely around the U.S., taking painstaking note of ever-increasing tendencies toward violent behavior. Her observations alarm her: the nearly universal admiration for violence that youth display is disquieting at best. "In addition to being able to *give* it—in terms of violent behavior—you have to be able to *take* it," she emphasizes. "Since violence and its consequences are no big deal, youth do not display much emotion about it. We don't see pain and empathy and remorse until there are very devastating consequences."

Why is life so devalued among so many youth?, I ask her.

"Children have to be valued in order to learn that life is valuable," Prothrow-Stith says. "Obviously, most families do a pretty good job of teaching their children that they are valuable. But this important job can't be left to the family alone. Society has to think that children are valuable, and that belief has to be demonstrated in public policy and in the ethos of the community."

As a society, our commitment to children is woefully inadequate, she believes. Instead, children are exploited as a lucrative and vulnerable market for a plethora of violent, life-diminishing products. "Children are viewed as economically valuable by major corporations who sell them products. Of course, the same corporations are nonchalant about the effects of their sales. As long as children buy their goods, manufacturers can be indifferent to the fact that their products are unneeded and unhealthy. We must decide, as a society, that some things really are more important than money."

In what ways, I ask, can public policy effect change? "We're doing more crisis intervention and imprisonment," Prothrow-Stith says evenly, "and spend-

ing loads of money being big and mean and bad and tough on crime, but literally ignoring the front end of the problem. We have schools that are housed in horrible buildings, places in which none of us would spend our work day if we had a choice. We have schools with no books; we have schools with no physical education programs. Most communities that I visit have built new jails and have cut needed educational programs in the schools."

She adds, "At one level, you get what you pay for."

THE SCHOOL'S ROLE IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

How can the school play a role in mitigating violence in our society? I ask. Is this truly the school's responsibility?

"The school has a major role," Prothrow-Stith says firmly. "The socialization process that takes place in the school is an essential part of the educational process. Occasionally I hear teachers say, 'I don't teach how to get along.' But you can't teach math without teaching kids how to get along. While you're teaching math, you're teaching children how to treat each other, how to treat people who are different, how to behave with people who don't understand. Literally, you are teaching children how to get along with others and how to be socialized."

She places responsibility squarely on educators to create a movement that recognizes and promotes the importance of adequate socialization in schools, so that they are environments where children learn the difference between right and wrong. "Those students who do less well in school are often more at risk for being involved in violent behavior," she explains. "Schools could—and should—make a big contribution to this issue by not only teaching everybody how to read and do math, but also how to exist in an environment in which that would take place."

Finally, she believes schools should engage actively in programs aimed at reducing violence. "We need to teach children how to handle conflict and anger, how to solve problems in a very deliberate way. Schools must be safe havens, examples of non-violence, places where children learn the essentials for functioning in society in addition to learning the basics of reading and writing—in some ways to make up for what the rest of society isn't doing now."

She points to research conducted by the Governor's Alliance Against Drugs in Massachusetts to illustrate how powerful advertising is in promoting self-destructive behavior among youth, citing a pre- and post-survey of children who entered a three-year substance abuse prevention curriculum. "Self-reported behavior around drugs decreased after the three years in every category except alcohol," she says, "where it rose slightly. This was unexplained for a long time because the curriculum dealt with alcohol more than with other drugs."

While casually watching television one evening and viewing an anti-drugs public service spot immediately followed by an alcohol commercial, Prothrow-Stith was struck with a realization: educators possess and transmit the correct prevention messages, but are contradicted by the media—which contradicts its own messages and public service announcements. Commercials for alcohol preceded by anti-drugs messages are too contradictory and confusing for children to absorb, she told me.

Doesn't this suggest, I ask her, that the problem of violence is simply too global to be placed upon the shoulders of educators who are held increasingly accountable for the systemic problems of society? What about harnessing a coalition of forces to combat it?

"Schools can't do it alone," she acknowledges, "but obviously they can mitigate and counter some of the things that are going on, just as families always have intervened in the lives of children.

"I challenge educators to do this, because I think classroom teachers ought to be outraged by the lack of priority public policy gives to children and schools. Educators should lead a movement to change that. Instead, most of the teachers' unions debate salary and contract issues, which is disappointing, because there is a larger mission."

Prothrow-Stith quickly adds, "I realize that I'm prescribing something for another profession that my own profession of physicians hasn't been able to accomplish in terms of health care reform. Nonetheless, even given the substantial difficulties, I would love to see teachers leading a violence reduction and conflict resolution movement."

I ask if she believes that parents should monitor videos and books that their children choose to ensure they are non-violent. "Yes," she replies, although she insists that such monitoring should possess a core of reason rather than blind censorship motivated by fear. "Throughout the education process, one ought to analyze with students why they like something, how they have learned to like it, and why people produce whatever it is."

Since the profit motive lies at the core of the production and promotion of violent entertainment and weapons for children, she maintains that the allure of such products will be lessened if children's sophistication about the motives of manufacturers and advertisers is elevated. "There is the need to indicate to youngsters that all these things they watch and see are lies," she emphasizes. "Many kids, especially older ones, think they know

[about the author]

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what is real and what is not, but when they're watching the stories, they get caught up in them to the point that they don't think of alternatives."

LEARNING ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE AND RAGE

Alternatives to violence are Prothrow-Stith's main message. "Unless you train yourself, you go right along with the story," she notes. "There are strategies for watching movies and television that should be shared with children, and it is the school's responsibility to do that. After all, the parent may think the school assigned a project and the child should complete it."

What elements comprise a good curriculum against violence? I ask.

Prothrow-Stith believes the first step in any educative campaign against violence begins with the need to acknowledge the primacy of violence in our society. "We have to realize that violence is the norm," she says sadly, "and that children admire violence. We actively promote and celebrate violence ourselves. In some ways, children are being socialized very actively to have the opinions about violence that they hold."

Acknowledging that violence dominates our society, she believes, sets the right tone for violence reduction programs. "We don't want to make children defensive; it is very helpful to have them understand that people make money from guns and from movies. Nobody worries about the consequences; nobody is liable for the consequences except an individual but the individual doesn't make money from the products."

Recognizing that anger and conflict are normal human responses to stress is another key educative component, she maintains. "No one is perfect. Conflict and anger can be energizing; they can provide an opportunity for growth and creativity. Most of us, as adults, have learned to use our anger creatively to solve the problem. We also need to focus not just on the kids who fight, but on the whole—the kids who create the fights, who instigate the fights, who pass the rumors, who run to see the fights. If we look at adolescent development and sociocultural issues, a lot of these fights represent peer pressure that accumulates over time. They are carefully choreographed. Often it is more important to deal with the whole class, not just those who have been labeled as fighters."

How has she seen youth respond, I ask, when violence reduction is taught actively to them in the school setting?

In her response, Prothrow-Stith points to the youngsters who are the most fearful. "They are the most receptive," she emphasizes. "Often it is the suburban, middle-class kids who are callous and playful with violence. Some of my colleagues, who have a very analytical approach and don't feel pressure for things to change, believe that nothing will work.

"The people closest to violence—those who live with it daily—are often the most receptive. They know who is authentic and who is not. Kids know if you are talking from your experience. As a another starting place, teachers of violence prevention programs need to deal with their own issues of anger and violence. How do they feel about violence? At what point would anger push them to violence?"

This is especially important, she underscores, because the classroom can be a setting in which students challenge the teacher, pushing for limits. "They will ask: 'What if I hit you? What if this or that happened? What if somebody did this to your daughter; what would you do?'

"As a teacher, you must be prepared to respond, not in a trite way, but in an authentic way that means you must know yourself and your own reactions and attitudes toward anger and violence."

Such awareness of one's own tolerance to stressors suggests teachers need considerable inservice of their own before embarking on delivery of a violence prevention program. Is this indeed the case?

"It does require significant thought and energy," Prothrow-Stith responds. "In the curriculum I developed, for instance, there is a way to do the training in a short period of time. However, some teachers are better prepared and better equipped to go ahead with it than others, depending on their level of interaction and how much they challenge themselves on issues."

Violence prevention should not be something special tacked on to teachers' already crowded worklives, she believes, but instead should be an integral part of a school's educative mission. Particularly in high schools, where teachers frequently are locked into teaching only their content area, attention to issues surrounding conflict resolution, the management of anger, and violence prevention are especially appropriate. "Kids in high school are at the peak of their adolescent development," she explains, "and it is very helpful for them to learn to understand their own behavior."

EXAMPLES OF AN ANTI-VIOLENCE CURRICULUM

In the past 25 to 30 years it appears that we, as a society, have slid into a terrible state—into an antisocial situation where we glorify and profit from violence, where human life has lost much of its meaning, where the loss of life seems inconsequential, where people are numbed by news reports of yet another murder or incident of domestic violence. If this continues unchecked, I ask, where does she see us 20 years from now?

"We will be in something very close to the Wild West," Prothrow-Stith says ruefully, "where everybody carries a gun, there are regular shootouts on the street, and killing is the way of solving conflict. In my worst fears, that is something I can envision. We already have lost a certain amount of safety, which is visible when we look at our homicide rates compared to other industrialized countries. Many people feel they must be armed to go out.

Ultimately, of course, this attitude contributes to the problem.

"One student in an alternative school said to me: 'What is the big deal? I have a gun. You have a gun. We have a beef. We have a shootout.'

"What else has he experienced?" she asks rhetorically. "How else has anyone taught him to handle conflict? That is what all the superheroes do on TV. They don't stop to try to solve a conflict. Some of the movies that are marketed directly to children, like *Kindergarten Cop*, show people shooting others in the bathroom at school. If we look at this, we realize our children are sent down a path that says they have no other way to solve problems other than through violent reactions."

Since she is a physician with a background in public health, how did she become interested in violence prevention as an educative mission for schools? I ask.

"I started looking at violence as a public health problem, so naturally health education came to mind," she replies. "Health education is one of the major strategies within public health. Using the same strategies that have been used to prevent smoking or drunk driving to prevent violence was an irresistible challenge."

Providing information on a consistent basis to children, Prothrow-Stith insists, is the best way to ensure that the future will improve. "We hope that the information we provide becomes part of children's standard knowledge base and is incorporated into their day-to-day activities, their attitudes, and their behavior."

Admitting that children are a "captive audience" in schools, she asks a question of her own: "Why do you rob a bank? Because the money is there. Why do we think about health education in the schools? Because that is where the kids are. Obviously all kids aren't in school, and that suggests the need for an additional set of strategies. But health education in the classroom is a mainstay of public health."

Prothrow-Stith believes a successful violence prevention program moves in carefully coordinated stages. The curriculum she has developed is divided into ten sessions, offered for 45 minutes to an hour, depending on the length of the class period.

"The first three sessions set the stage for our work. We talk about violence in America compared with other countries. We talk about friend and family violence, and, in particular, we hone in on violence being a learned behavior that is preventable."

The second stage of the curriculum deals specifically with anger, opening the discussion to questions such as: What makes you angry? What are ways in which you can handle anger in a non-violent way? "We culminate," Prothrow-Stith explains, "with a cost-benefit analysis of fighting. After listing causes of anger and solutions to anger, the discussion centers around healthy and unhealthy reactions to it, including specific targeting of fighting." At that point, Prothrow-Stith hopes students are primed to prevent fighting.

'What is the big deal? I have a gun. You have a gun. We have a beef. We have a shootout.'

Finally, the last section of the curriculum engages students in role playing and distinct strategies for handling anger, for preventing violence, and for resolving conflict productively. "If teachers wished to add to the curriculum," she observes, "they could provide additional sessions on conflict resolution, anger management, and issues of dating violence or family violence."

As with many other educative efforts, she believes it is important to target young children—but she also maintains adolescents must not be neglected, since part of their development and peer socialization encourages unhealthy reactions to violence.

"Although it is important to offer this early, we should offer it throughout the educational experience," she says. "Actually, it is something we could teach to parents, or to future parents, so that they could have some sense of child development, of handling anger and emotions within the context of a family."

Adolescents are especially susceptible to violence, and Prothrow-Stith is deeply concerned about their vulnerability. "Some reasons for their vulnerability have to do with peer pressure, with adolescent narcissism, with self-consciousness, and with a certain amount of risk-taking. Even if we have taught good anger management and excellent conflict resolution skills to youngsters, during the adolescent years we have to do something extra."

Part of the "something extra," she tells me, has to do with redefining the popular image of the American hero, which has edged closer and closer over the years to an anti-social, semi-psychotic figure who acts violently without remorse, conscience, or guilt. "We need to change the peer pressure so that the pressure is not to fight, but to solve the problem without fighting. If we could adjust the social norm among teenagers to one where fighting is considered stupid, then we have made progress."

In order to successfully implement a violence prevention curriculum, what conditions in the school must be present? I ask.

"Teachers must be interested in teaching these skills," she concludes, "and they must have the full support of the administration. They also need dedicated training time and some support as they implement it, so that they aren't helpless when questions come up. In general, the teachers who are the most successful teaching these skills are those who are committed not just to helping their students but to helping this society deal with the issue of violence."

GENDER & SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

[norma barquet]

THE MOST RECENT ACTS OF VIOLENCE BY CHILDREN HAVE PROMPTED US AS A NATION TO LOOK AT THE CAUSES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THIS CRISIS IN OUR SCHOOLS. IN FACT, ACCORDING TO PUBLIC AGENDA, A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION THAT CONDUCTS PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES, SCHOOL SAFETY WAS IDENTIFIED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE AFFECTING SCHOOLS BY THOSE SURVEYED (JOHNSON & IMMERWAHR, 1994/1995).

Yet school violence does not exist in a vacuum. It is directly related to the violence in our society. And for many children, particularly those who experience family violence early in their lives, school can often be their only safe haven. In 1992, over three million youngsters were reported to child protection advocates as possible abuse victims (U.S. Department of Justice, 1992). Thus, for many children in our society, schools are often safer than the environment where they live.

Aggression and violence are the direct result of learned behavior. Our society is full of examples of violence and aggression that unfortunately have become a part of our daily lives regardless of where we live, work, or play.

Our children are both the victims and, as seen from last year's headlines, the perpetrators of violent crimes. Although there is a sharp increase in violence among girls and women, females continue to be more often victims than perpetrators of crime in our society. In a Harvard University Violence Against Women class presentation, Nancy Isaac and Deborah Prothrow-Stith reported that four million women in the U.S. are severely abused every year by their spouse or partner. And 26 percent of all females who were victims of murder were slain by husbands or boyfriends, while three percent of male victims were killed by wives or girlfriends.

The early messages that parents send to children are extremely powerful. We expect girls to be passive and nurturing and boys to be aggressive and competitive. Since the beginning of their lives, children in our society learn to behave in ways that meet their parents' expectations in order to gain their approval. As parents, we buy radically different toys for girls than for boys. Female children learn to be moms, housekeepers, and makeup artists. Males, on the other hand, are expected to fantasize being "GI Joes," play with guns, and combat fear.

The media also help shape the minds of our children and set society's expectations of them. Cartoons, video games, and movies are full of examples of strong, brave, aggressive and often violent male characters. Female characters, with few exceptions, continue to be passive and fit the ideal of "beauty" in our society, i.e., blond, thin, and fragile-looking. Advertisers also help reinforce these images of girls and boys in our society through the printed media targeted to them as consumers.

In schools, boys and girls begin to practice in larger social settings what they have learned in their home environments. Bullying is a form of aggression that begins to show in the early stages of children's development; it can lead to more violent forms of behavior if it is not resolved. Yet schools for the most part either ignore bullying or squelch the behavior without dealing with its causes. We continue to hear the expression, "Boys will be boys," in reference to their aggressive behavior or "This behavior is not tolerated here," as the only way to handle this problem of violence in schools. These actions and their causes, left unexamined, often turn into more serious conduct such as sexual harassment and other more violent behaviors. Girls, on the other hand, learn coping behaviors to deal with intimidation and violence in school. Often they become less engaged in school activities, drop out of school prematurely, become depressed, and even contemplate suicide to avoid being targets of this aggressive behavior.

Unfortunately, disciplinary programs in schools typically do not take seriously the development of potentially violent behavior in children until it is almost too late to reverse. In general, the school curriculum does not seek to change the patterns of behaviors which are oppressive in our society. Educators are expected to pass along information and skills; few are expected or encouraged to promote values through education. This is not to say that nothing can be done to change this culture of violence that seems to be perpetuated by our social institutions. Thus, it is not surprising that schools deal with the misbehavior of children by using a "get tough" approach that does very little to create a safe environment in schools (Noguera, 1995). As Henry Giroux writes: "Critical educators take up culture as a vital source for developing a politics of identity, community and pedagogy. Culture is not monolithic or unchanging, but is a site of multiple and

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heterogeneous borders where different histories, languages, experiences, and voices intermingle amidst diverse relations of power and privilege (Giroux, 1992)."

In other words, we can change school environments to bring about long-term positive outcomes. The hoped-for changes need to be structural in nature and to take into consideration the socioemotional and educational needs of students. The disciplinary policies of schools need to change from excluding and suspending students to addressing the problem from a preventive perspective.

Parents and educators need to do more to prevent violence among children and youth. They can teach and model assertive behaviors for girls so they can communicate more effectively in dealing with negative and violent behavior. Boys, on the other hand, need help with alternatives for self-expression and non- physical problem-solving techniques.

Our competing forces are great. Now we have CNN and the Internet in our homes bringing pictures of violence from all over the world. Women are the subject of violence in songs, popular music videos, movies, and TV shows. So, how do we begin to deal with reversing the patterns of aggression against children in general, and girls specifically in our society?

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

As parents, there is much we can do at home to prevent negative behaviors in our children. We can:

MODEL POSITIVE ways to resolve conflict.

CONTINUE TO BUILD OUR OWN SKILLS in communication, self-expression, and problem solving.

HELP OUR CHILDREN DEVELOP good communication skills.

ENGAGE CHILDREN in meaningful conversations about current events that deal with issues of violence, their causes, and possible solutions.

ENCOURAGE GIRLS to be more assertive and to speak up.

GIVE BOYS THE MESSAGE early on that being compassionate and caring are qualities that we value in them. Help them develop non-aggressive strategies for conflict resolution.

MAKE YOUR HOME A SAFE ENVIRONMENT where your daughters and sons can learn how to deal with potentially difficult experiences they may encounter in school and in society in general.

STOP BUYING TOYS that promote violence and aggression.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO PLAY IN MIXED GROUPS from their early years so they develop strong and positive relationships with members of the opposite sex and become tolerant individuals.

WHAT EDUCATORS CAN DO:

Educators can be of tremendous support to parents. They can:

INCLUDE CRITICAL DISCOURSE AND PEDAGOGY throughout the curriculum that addresses issues of power and privilege in our society.

BE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS and advocate for *all* children, including girls.

ENSURE THAT THE CULTURE of the school values girls and boys equally and that this is stated, modeled, and reinforced by all members of the school community.

INTEGRATE CLASSES AND PROGRAMS as much as possible and thoughtfully design classroom activities to develop strong and positive relationships between girls and boys.

DEVELOP A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT where all students can safely learn.

IMPLEMENT EDUCATIONALLY SOUND and effective alternative programs to develop new patterns of behavior among aggressive children and youth.

ESTABLISH PEER MENTORING and conflict mediation programs.

PROVIDE SAFE FORUMS for discussion and debate on "controversial" issues.

INSTITUTE NON-VIOLENT APPROACHES TO DISCIPLINE. The most effective ways to "educate" our future generations about peaceful co-existence in an increasingly diverse world.

IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS that specifically target the reduction of violence in schools.

WHAT COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN DO:

As citizens, we can be more effectively involved in preventing violence among our youth. We can:

STOP PATRONIZING PROGRAMS, movies, music, and publications that promote violence in general, and violence and aggression towards girls and women in particular.

WRITE AND COMPLAIN to companies that sponsor violent programs.

WRITE TO YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS with your expectations and suggestions regarding the need for sound and responsible legislative action.

BECOME A MENTOR to a student or a parent who needs support.

INITIATE PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS in community organizations and on job sites.

PRESSURE SCHOOLS to do more to prevent harassment and violence.

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PROMISING PRACTICES: SAVE – STAND AGAINST A VIOLENT ENVIRONMENT

[eva s. kubinski]

THE RAPID CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT (RCSD), LOCATED IN SOUTH DAKOTA AT THE EDGE OF THE BLACK HILLS, MAY NOT BE THE FIRST PLACE THAT ONE CONSIDERS WHEN THINKING OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE. INSTEAD, RCSD TYPIFIES MANY RURAL DISTRICTS OF ITS SIZE. APPROXIMATELY 15,000 STUDENTS, K-12, ATTEND RCSD SCHOOLS. OF THIS STUDENT POPULATION, APPROXIMATELY 15 PERCENT ARE AMERICAN INDIAN AND 32 PERCENT QUALIFY FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH. THE DROPOUT RATE IS RELATIVELY LOW: 3.3 PERCENT. HOWEVER, THERE IS ACTIVE GANG ACTIVITY IN THE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS "FAMILY FEUDS" AND OTHER DISRUPTION.

Pam Teaney Thomas, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program Coordinator for RSCD, grew up in Rapid City and remembers a safe town where people could leave their doors unlocked with impunity. While she still considers Rapid City a relatively safe community, Teaney Thomas has watched gang members move into the city and has seen an increase in other violence problems more common to larger cities.

This change has also been noticed by other community members. Long-term residents recognize that they no longer live in the same city they knew when they were young and do not have the same feeling of safety. New residents moving to Rapid City from larger communities also see some typically urban problems showing up in quieter Rapid City.

While Teaney Thomas also considers the school district to be relatively safe, the district has experienced a few frightening incidents. One such incident occurred in the early 1990s when an armed student took over a classroom at one of the high schools, ordered the teacher out, and shot up the wall in front of the other students. While this frightening situation resolved itself without loss of life, there have been other incidents, such as fights and vandalism, that have occurred in the district. These events are a stark reminder that any community, rural or urban, can be vulnerable to the effects of violence.

All of these concerns spurred a change in understanding the problem of safety. In turn this understanding led to action by the community. In 1995, Teaney Thomas met with Rapid City Chief Deputy Sheriff De Glassgow about school and community violence. Although a prevention program already existed in the school district, there was no coordinated school-community effort in place to address violence prevention and reduction. As a result of the discussion that occurred at this meeting, SAVE (Stand Against a Violent Environment) was born.

SAVE is a grass-roots movement intended to prevent and reduce violence in the Rapid City community, promote strong community involvement, and make violence reduction and prevention the responsibility of *all* community members. Since community and business participation is integral both to SAVE and the coalition that later grew out of it, the Rapid City School District has more partners in their efforts to prevent violence.

ACTION AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

SAVE began with a community coalition that used study circles to prompt a dialogue about the issue of violence in Rapid City and ways to prevent and reduce it. The new group determined the level of community concern about violence. A community survey showed that while 80 percent of the respondents to the survey indicated that they felt safe, most recognized that violence was an increasing problem. Respondents suggested it was important to teach values and respect, provide drug and alcohol prevention programs, and establish neighborhood watch programs. A majority of the respondents also indicated that they felt strongly enough about the issue to become involved in the prevention effort.

One of SAVE's early contributions was its definition of violence within the school, community, and workplace. Members of SAVE agreed that: "Violence is any mean word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings or things."

SAVE identified a continuum of violent acts, ranging from eye rolling, gesturing, and gossiping to hitting/kicking, flashing a weapon, or shooting someone. They reasoned that violence always has a starting point, such as a look or gesture, and if it can be interrupted, a potentially violent situation can be stopped or prevented. For school staff, law enforcement personnel, and community members to work together to interrupt this process, all partners needed to have a common language and understanding of violence.

During its first year, SAVE's main goal was to educate parents, students, and community members about violence and how to reduce and prevent its incidence. This educative effort quickly showed that everyone could participate in violence prevention and reduction. SAVE sponsored activities to build community-wide awareness of steps to prevent violence and to empower the community to overcome

violence. Violence prevention facilitators were trained and sent out to work with SAVE-inspired neighborhood groups and private businesses to build a broad awareness about violence prevention and reduction. A common vocabulary and understanding among the three arms of the coalition—school, community, and law enforcement—was developed and reinforced.

During its second year, SAVE shifted its focus from defining violence and specifying violent behaviors to discovering the positive actions and prosocial behaviors they wanted to promote. In 1997, SAVE articulated a specific vision (working together to promote a spirit of community) and six goals, which included:

- Reestablishing and supporting values in the community
- Increasing youth participation in SAVE
- Encouraging and promoting a safe environment free from fear
- Increasing community participation
- Focusing on resiliency and asset building
- Promoting unity [From: *SAVE Rapid City*]

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

A citywide coalition composed of representatives from different neighborhood groups meets monthly to support the various neighborhood groups that have been developed as an integral part of SAVE. During these meetings, individuals share ideas and information on prospective activities. SAVE encourages neighborhood groups to connect with one another. SAVE provides facilitators to train new neighborhood groups and businesses about violence prevention and reduction. It also continues to sponsor neighborhood study circles about violence issues. A local advertising agency produced a video which explained SAVE's vision and goals; this video is used to help educate community and business groups.

In 1999, SAVE continues to affect community involvement in the ongoing prevention and reduction of violence. Rapid City recently held a week-long community celebration called "Voices Together SAVE." Each day was designated as a call for action to different segments of the community: Health and Human Services; Family and Religion; Workplace; Youth; Civic Organizations; and Community and Neighborhoods. The week ended with a multicultural celebration attended by over 900 people.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Teaney Thomas felt strongly that people should take an active role in preventing and reducing violence by creating a community movement, not an organization. She believed that successful community involvement meant that people took ownership of a problem, rather than just writing a check to support a cause. As a result of the SAVE movement, Teaney Thomas reports the following benefits:

REDUCTION OF VIOLENCE AND DISRUPTION. From the moment that the SAVE continuum of violence was presented to students and discussed in classrooms, Teaney Thomas received reports from teachers and school counselors that school disruption and violence had been reduced. One counselor attributed this change to providing the students with the words and ideas needed to express anger and frustration to teachers and their peers before those feelings build to a point where violence seems to be the only way to resolve a situation. Students can also recognize factors and actions that can cause a potentially violent situation to escalate.

REINFORCEMENT OF ANTI-VIOLENCE MESSAGES. Since the message and ideas of SAVE are not only taught and discussed in school, but also promoted at home and in the community, students receive an anti-violence message in more than one place and in a unified manner. Since there is a greater understanding of the issue of violence in the schools and community, prevention activities that might have been criticized or controversial in the past now receive better parent and community support. Community and school tolerance of disruption and violence has been changed, leading to a new norm for acceptable behavior.

INCREASED PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT OF THE RAPID CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT. Because of the increased community and parental awareness of district activities, Teaney Thomas has seen a greater level of support when important issues arise or when there may be controversy about a district decision. Businesses and community groups show a better understanding of schools and students. They also demonstrate greater commitment to prevention. For example, when a mentoring program was started in one of the high schools designed to pair American Indian students with adult mentors, several SAVE members were among the first volunteers.

PROMOTING A CULTURE OF INVOLVEMENT. Since SAVE began, there has been an increase in involvement and participation in school activities by parents and community members. One very visible increase was seen in the number of parents participating in the RCSD's Parent-Teacher Association.

[about the author]

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FROM THE MOMENT THAT THE SAVE CONTINUUM OF VIOLENCE WAS PRESENTED TO STUDENTS AND DISCUSSED IN CLASSROOMS, TEANEY THOMAS RECEIVED REPORTS FROM TEACHERS AND SCHOOL COUNSELORS THAT SCHOOL DISRUPTION AND VIOLENCE HAD BEEN REDUCED. ONE COUNSELOR ATTRIBUTED THIS CHANGE TO PROVIDING THE STUDENTS WITH THE WORDS AND IDEAS NEEDED TO EXPRESS ANGER AND FRUSTRATION TO TEACHERS AND THEIR PEERS BEFORE THOSE FEELINGS BUILD TO A POINT WHERE VIOLENCE SEEMS TO BE THE ONLY WAY TO RESOLVE A SITUATION.

INCREASED PERCEPTION OF UNITY BETWEEN THE DISTRICT AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT. In the past, it seemed that school staff and the larger community did not always share the same level of concern about violence prevention and related issues. However, due to the new school, community, and law enforcement linkages, greater credibility is given to school district and local law enforcement concerns.

A CHOICE IN WHAT TO DO TO PREVENT VIOLENCE. By using the violence continuum in educating students, teachers, parents, and community members, individuals have more options to choose from when they must address violence. For example, while some people may be comfortable wading into the middle of a fight to stop a violent incident, others might not want to risk injury. By addressing a less threatening behavior, such as starting rumors or name calling, any community member or student can make a real difference.

Violence impacts everyone negatively. In a community, it leads to fear, anger, damage to property, and possible loss of life. SAVE's ultimate goal is to reduce disruption as well as reduce and prevent violence. When this goal is reached in schools, teachers can teach and students can learn.

BUILDING COMMUNITY COALITIONS AGAINST VIOLENCE: FIRST STEPS

1. BECOME KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT WHAT PROGRAMS ARE IN PLACE IN YOUR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY. CONTACT THE LEADERS OF THESE GROUPS AND LOOK FOR NATURAL LINKAGES AND AREAS OF COMMON CONCERN AND INTEREST.

2. DISCOVER WHAT YOUR COMMUNITY THINKS ABOUT VIOLENCE. ENLIST THE ASSISTANCE OF GROUPS THAT MAY ALREADY BE COLLECTING THIS INFORMATION, INCLUDING LOCAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC INTEREST GROUPS. EDUCATE YOUR LOCAL MEDIA ABOUT YOUR VISION AND GOALS BY SENDING A COALITION OF AT LEAST THREE PEOPLE REPRESENTING THE THREE SEGMENTS REPRESENTED IN THE COMMUNITY TO THEM.

3. FIND OUT WHAT THE CHILDREN IN THE COMMUNITY FEEL IS IMPORTANT. OFTEN STUDENTS HAVE INSIGHT INTO PROBLEMS OR AREAS OF STRENGTH.

4. BRING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THREE GROUPS (SCHOOLS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND COMMUNITY GROUPS) TOGETHER TO WORK ON A PLAN AND A PROCESS. HELP PARTICIPANTS TAKE PROACTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGE.

violence prevention/ reduction resources

[mary chaffee & eva s. kubinski]

THE RANGE OF WEB SITES AND RESOURCE LINKS FOUND ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB THAT OFFER GUIDANCE TO WHAT SCHOOLS, COMMUNITIES, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND KIDS CAN DO TOGETHER REGARDING VIOLENCE PREVENTION IS IMMENSE. IN THE FOLLOWING LIST, WE IDENTIFY SOME KEY RESOURCES FOUND ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB. REMEMBER THAT BY GOING TO THESE SITES THERE WILL OFTEN BE FURTHER HYPERLINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES. SO, EXPLORE AND HAVE FUN! THERE IS MUCH OUT THERE. IN ADDITION TO THE VIOLENCE PREVENTION/REDUCTION RESOURCES CONTAINED IN THIS INSERT, WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT THE CC-VI WEB RESOURCE LIBRARY FOR A MORE EXTENSIVE LISTING OF WEB CONNECTIONS TO RESOURCES ON VIOLENCE PREVENTION.

URL: http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/ccvi/

CURRICULA/RESOURCES

CHARACTER COUNTS!
http://www.charactercounts.org
The homepage of Character Counts! — a diverse, nonpartisan alliance of leading humanservice and educational organizations working together to strengthen the character of young people today.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION EDUCATION: A GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS, YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITY AND JUVENILE JUSTICE SETTINGS
[October 1996] **http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/conflic.pdf**

CRITICAL ISSUE: DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING SAFE SCHOOLS
[Found on the Pathways to School Improvement Internet Server. Located on the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) website]
http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/ envrnmnt/drugfree/sa200.htm
The coverage of this *Critical Issue: Developing and Maintaining Safe Schools* is in-depth and comprehensive. There is a wealth of information. It is well worth a visit.

MANUAL ON SCHOOL UNIFORMS
[From the US Department of Education. 1996]
http://www.ed.gov/updates/uniforms.html

NATIONAL SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER
http://www.nscl.org/
The National School Safety Center web site provides technical assistance, legal and legislative aid, publications, films, and national focus for cooperative solutions that help combat problems of crime and violence in schools. It is a wealth of information.

NCADI TEACHING "KITS" FOR EDUCATORS
http://www.health.org/pubs/teachkit.htm
A website with various suggested groupings of publications and posters for educators from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information.

PARTNERSHIPS AGAINST VIOLENCE NETWORK (PAVNET) ONLINE
http://www.pavnet.org/
As the introduction on its website explains, "PAVNET Online is a 'virtual library' of information about violence and youth-at-risk, representing data from seven different Federal agencies. It is a 'one-stop,' searchable, information resource to help reduce redundancy in information management and provide clear and comprehensive access to information for States and local communities."

PREVENTING YOUTH HATE CRIME: A MANUAL FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES
[From the US Department of Education. 1996]
http://www.ed.gov/pubs/HateCrime/start.html

SCHOOLWIDE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
[1998] **http://www.cec.sped.org/digests/e563.htm**
From the ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education (ERIC EC), an overview of schoolwide behavior management systems.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON SCHOOL SAFETY
[1998] **http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/Work/101598.html**
A description of the conference held in October where the President released the findings of the first Annual Report on School Safety. Held in conjunction with youth violence experts and advocates, educators, elected officials, law enforcement, and prevention and intervention practitioners, to discuss and learn more about what can be done to make schools and communities safer.

PLANNING

ACTION GUIDE: CREATING SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS
[From the US Department of Education. 1997]
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/actguid/index.html

EARLY WARNING, TIMELY RESPONSE: A GUIDE TO SAFE SCHOOLS
[1998] **http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html**

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOL SAFETY PLANNING: A SCHOOL SAFETY SURVEY INSTRUMENT
[From the University of Oregon's School Safety Project. 1996]
http://interact.uoregon.edu/sss/htmls/schl_safe.html
Essential components that should be considered in developing a school safety plan.

VOICES VS. VIOLENCE RESOURCE KIT
[From the National Mental Health Association. Website document. No date.]
http://www.nmha.org/children/voices/kit/index.cfm
For building community coalitions against violence.

PREVENTION

ANNUAL REPORT ON SCHOOL SAFETY 1998
http://www.ed.gov/PDFDocs/schoolsafety.pdf
The U.S. Department of Education's website provides a copy of the *Annual Report on School Safety 1998*. For ease of downloading this document make sure that you have Adobe Acrobat Reader software installed on your computer.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE (CSPV)
http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/
This website is beautifully laid out and easy to navigate. CSPV was founded in 1992 with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to provide informed assistance to groups committed to understanding and preventing violence, particularly adolescent violence. It works from a multidisciplinary platform on the subject of violence and facilitates the building of bridges between the research community and the practitioners and policy makers. Each section of this website is worth exploring — especially *Information House*.

CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR PREVENTION
http://www.cpprev.org/
The Creative Partnerships for Prevention website provides current information, ideas, and resources on how to use the arts and humanities to enhance drug and violence prevention programming, foster resiliency in youth, and implement collaborations within communities to strengthen prevention programs for youth.

CRITICAL ISSUE: DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING SAFE SCHOOLS
[Found on the Pathways to School Improvement Internet Server. Located on the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) website.]
http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/drugfree/sa200.htm
The coverage of this *Critical Issue: Developing and Maintaining Safe Schools* is in-depth and comprehensive. There is a wealth of information. It is well worth a visit. Check it out!

DR. DEBORAH PROTHROW-STITH PUBLICATIONS LIST
[Found on the Harvard School, Division of Public Health website.]
http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/Organizations/php/dpspub.html
A publications list of materials authored by Dr. Prothrow-Stith, nationally recognized public health leader, is found on the Harvard School, Division of Public Health web site.

EARLY PREVENTION (0-6) OF VIOLENCE DATABASE
[Found on the Great Lakes Regional Resource Center website.]
http://www.csnp.ohio-state.edu/glarrc.htm
This Early Prevention (0-6) of Violence database is organized into nine categories: Conflict Resolution Organizations; Conflict Resolution Programs and Materials; Organizations Involved in Early Prevention of Violence; Early Prevention of Violence Materials and Programs; Early Prevention of Violence Publications/Articles; Related Conferences; Related Online Resources; and Related Media Organizations. A search engine is used to access this database.

KEEPING SCHOOLS OPEN AS COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS: EXTENDING LEARNING IN A SAFE, DRUG-FREE ENVIRONMENT BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL
[From the US Department of Education. 1997]
http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/

PEACE IT TOGETHER COMMUNITY CENTER: STRATEGIES FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION
http://www.mcet.edu/peace/index.html
A website that includes links to violence prevention resources for educators, youth service providers, parents. Additional links to examples of action steps taken by schools, parents, students, community, and business groups.

PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS
[From the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. No date listed.]
http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/monographs/uds107/preventing_contents.html
A chapter of an online monograph that focuses on how to prevent violence in schools. Also contains recommendations about what schools and communities can do to stem the tide of violence in schools and in society.

SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAM AT THE US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/index.html

SAFE SCHOOLS: LESSONS FROM THE SITES ISSUES ABOUT CHANGE -VOL. 5 NO. 2
[Found on the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) website]
http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues52.html/
Written by Alicia Castro, *Safe Schools: Lessons from the Sites* introduces important elements of effective safe school programs and describes specific safe school programs undertaken at a Texas high school, a New Mexico middle school, and a Louisiana elementary school.

SCHOOL SAFETY
[Found on the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education website]
http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/administration/safety/
The *School Safety* section found on the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education website is excellent. It offers *A Guide to Safe Schools* in formats easy to download; ERIC/CUE monographs, directories, digests and information alerts; special publications; and guides of internet resources.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION
[ERIC Digest 1995]
http://eric.uoregon.edu/publications/digests/digest094.html

TEACHER'S WORKSHOP
http://www.teachersworkshop.com/
The Teacher's Workshop website offers technical assistance and resource information on prevention of school violence. Geared towards teachers, it also has an interactive e-mail component entitled *Teacher's Exchange* which provides teachers with the ability to create internet collaborations for their students.

TRUCE LETTER (TEACHERS FOR RESISTING UNHEALTHY CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT)

http://www.nctvv.org/NCTV%20Images/TRUCEltr.htm

Located on the National Coalition on Television Violence web site, the letter from Teachers for Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment attempts to see through violence in the media effort.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION PLAN: UNLEARNING VIOLENCE

[From the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. 1995]

http://www.educ.state.mn.us/collab/unlearni.pdf

VIRGINIA YOUTH VIOLENCE PROJECT

[Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia website.]

http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/curry/centers/youthvio/home.html

The Virginia Youth Violence Project is a gem of a website. The Project focuses on identifying effective methods and policies for the prevention of violence in youth, especially in school settings. It is easy to navigate and has a very comprehensive resource section. Checkout the *Hotlinks to Other Websites*!

WEPREVENT: TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

http://www.weprevent.org/

The WePrevent website is easy to navigate, creatively designed and opens with the premise that crime prevention is made a reality by individuals who put it into practice in their daily lives and in their interactions with others. Besides offering substantive information on crime prevention, it provides some excellent links to other resources on the web. Made possible through a generous grant from The Allstate Foundation as part of their efforts to make communities across the United States safer, the Web site is maintained by the National Crime Prevention Council as part of its commitment to direct and administer the National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign (best known for McGruff the Crime Dog® and his nephew Scruff®).

WISCONSIN CLEARINGHOUSE FOR PREVENTION RESOURCES

http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/wch/WCHDirectory.htm

The Wisconsin Clearinghouse for Prevention Resources website serves as a bridge between research and practice in the field of prevention. Useful resource links are found in a section entitled *Youth Violence / School Violence* under Links to Other Websites.

YOUTHINFO

http://youth.os.dhhs.gov/youthinf.htm

YouthInfo is a part of Safe Passages, a new U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) public health and youth development strategy which creates partnerships between the federal government and communities to support young people as they navigate their way to adulthood. The website, developed by HHS, is an information resource about America's teenagers. Among the resources found on the site are: a statistical profile of America's teenagers; the latest reports and publications about teenagers; information for parents of teens; speeches by federal officials on youth topics; links to youth-related websites at HHS, other federal agencies, and private foundations and research organizations.

YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION THROUGH EDUCATION

[From the Partnerships Against Violence NETwork (PAVNET) Online.]

http://www.reeusda.gov/pavnet/ye/youthed.html

A website that includes links to various violence prevention websites and resources.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

INDICATORS OF SCHOOL CRIME AND SAFETY 1998

[From the National Center for Education Statistics. 1998]

http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/safety/index.html

MONITORING THE FUTURE DATA 1998

[1998] **http://www.isr.umich.edu/src/mtf/**

PRINCIPAL'S REPORTS ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE: VIOLENCE AND DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS IN US PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1996-1997

[1998] **http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/violence/98030.pdf**

VIOLENCE IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS

[From the Center for the Study of and Prevention of Violence. 1998]

http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/research/violenceschools.html

Links to articles that review the latest research on the causes of youth violence in schools and communities. Also examines school-based interventions that have prevented or reduced school-based violence.

A REVIEW OF *EARLY WARNING TIMELY RESPONSE: A GUIDE TO SAFE SCHOOLS*

[john h. daly]

A PARTICULARLY USEFUL SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION GUIDE, *EARLY WARNING TIMELY RESPONSE: A GUIDE TO SAFE SCHOOLS*, WAS RELEASED IN AUGUST 1998 BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE. WRITTEN IN RESPONSE TO THE SPATE OF SCHOOL SHOOTINGS THAT OCCURRED IN 1998, THE *GUIDE* PROVIDES RESEARCH-BASED INFORMATION TO HELP SCHOOL STAFF AND PARENTS RECOGNIZE AND REACT APPROPRIATELY TO THE SIGNS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE. THE *GUIDE* ALSO INCLUDES INFORMATION TO HELP SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS DRAW UP A LOCAL SCHOOL EMERGENCY OR CRISIS PLAN AND TO PREPARE FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE OR OTHER SAFETY CONCERNS IN THE SCHOOL AND IN THE IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY.

School safety has particular meaning to me because I am a middle school principal. The late evening hours and weekend absences of a principal, as my family has come to understand, frequently are a result of serious concerns and actions taken about school safety. In fact, any school principal carries a heavy responsibility for the safety of all the citizens of his or her school.

In this article, along with my own reactions to the *Guide*, I include the thoughts and suggestions of an experienced school district safety director, Dr. John Olson of the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) in Madison, Wisconsin. Dr. Olson is known as a strong advocate for kids, a valued team player among school staff, and a vocal proponent of a safe learning environment. As a teacher, administrator, and coach, Dr. Olson has been a valuable guide to many students, teachers, and principals.

THE SIGNS: "WHAT DO I LOOK FOR?"

School principals tend to adopt feelings of guilt because we often receive the blame for a host of ills in contemporary society. With this in mind, I have found that it has been particularly helpful to read and review the third section of the *Guide*: "What To Look For." This section can be a key resource for the principal, the staff, and members of the community. It also can become an integral part of the local school emergency or crisis plan, which should be prepared by a school and community team. Being as prepared as possible helps school principals move beyond guilty feelings to the knowledge that they are doing everything in their power to keep schools and school citizens safe.

Principals are familiar with the part of their job description that includes the proverbial "eyes in the back of the head" and the ability to do several things at once. I know of few principals who cannot carry on a conversation and at the same time scan the environment for potential concerns. But even though we are attuned to the school environment, there may be warning signs of potential violence that we don't know about or fail to recognize. These signs, when considered together, can be significant indicators of real trouble ahead.

The *Guide* identifies sixteen early warning signs of student behavior which deserve our collective attention and consideration, including:

- social withdrawal
- excessive feelings of isolation and being alone
- excessive feelings of rejection
- being a victim of violence
- feelings of being picked on and persecuted
- low school interest and poor performance
- expressions of violence in writing and in drawings
- uncontrolled anger
- patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors
- history of discipline problems
- past history of violent and aggressive behavior
- intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes
- drug use and alcohol use
- affiliation with gangs
- inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms
- serious threats of violence

My colleague, Dr. Olson, views the identification of a combination of these signs as a clear reason for concern. He advises principals to provide professional development focused on school safety, using resources like the *Guide* and its section on the early warning signs. He also believes that training staff about these early warning signs goes beyond a school or district inservice and should be both in-depth and sustained.

As he said to me, "A district needs to keep professional development on safe schools as a top priority or the district and the entire community will pay for their decision. The community police and the security personnel of a school, as well as the community members of the school's

various partnerships, must be included in ongoing, sustained training."

The principal does not need to look very far to find a rationale to support safety as a top priority. During the 1997-98 school year, there were several acts of violence on or around school grounds. Dr. William Reisman, the keynote speaker at the recent conference of the Safe Schools Coalition in Orlando, Florida, shared some compelling data:

- Five percent of students state that they do not go to school on certain days because they are scared;
- Positions of teachers and principals at the junior high/middle school level now rank as the ninth most dangerous job—just ahead of all-night clerks at convenience stores;
- The average age of students who used weapons at schools this past year was 13.4 (junior high/middle school age);
- A common characteristic of the students involved in the school violence in Paducah, Kentucky; Pearle, Mississippi; Springfield, Oregon; and Jonesboro, Arkansas was that the students were disenfranchised from their school culture;
- And a characteristic profile of the students involved in the violent actions includes impulsivity, feelings of isolation, and reduced sensitivity to violence.

Dr. Olson challenges each of us as educational leaders to interpret this current data and the message within it. He views these statistics as a prime reason for schools to look critically at ways in which we can develop a safe school-community environment for living and learning. An effective school is a physical and emotional safe place. Dr. Olson asks us to reflect on individual students who could have been redirected if they had someone at the school who acted as mentors or, at the very least, provided a human connection to the school. As he said, "When there is an adult who is consistently at the school and available to the student, he or she feels connected. A greeting, a caring comment, or a supportive smile can go a long way."

CAUTIONS: "IS IT REAL?"

The principal walks on very thin ice when he or she assumes the worst based on a single observation. The research on effective schools and our own professional experiences as school leaders underline the importance of a collaborative culture. Whenever there are concerns about school safety, it is essential to have a team of colleagues at the local school and in the school district equally well-versed in recognizing these early warning signs.

I have found it useful to refer to the section of the *Guide* which provides a set of five important cautions or principles to use in the interpretation of the warning signs and any follow-up procedures.

1. **DO NO HARM.** The early warning signs are not to be used as a checklist nor as a reason for exclusion or disciplinary action. Once again, the importance of a team at the local school is underlined. The team helps to guard against overreaction, misinterpretation, and ensures confidentiality.
2. **UNDERSTAND VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION WITHIN A CONTEXT.** The principal or school staff member needs to look beyond and behind the behavior to understand and prepare an appropriate response.
3. **AVOID STEREOTYPES.** The early warning signs are potential indicators. They are not to be used to categorize nor to label an individual in any manner.
4. **VIEW THE WARNING SIGNS WITHIN A DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXT.** Students will wear a variety of social masks and act out in a variety of ways to test themselves and the people around them. This is part of the developmental stages of growth.
5. **UNDERSTAND THAT CHILDREN TYPICALLY EXHIBIT MULTIPLE WARNING SIGNS.** It is very important not to overreact to a single sign, a single action, or behavior.

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY: "IN WHAT WAYS SHOULD I RESPOND?"

The effective principal creates an internal list of safety concerns as he or she interacts with the students, the staff, and the parents in the everyday life of the school. The skill of this leader must be finetuned as he or she responds in an appropriate manner. When a response to a safety problem is necessary, the principal should consider the existent policies, procedures, and strategies of the school district. But, although useful as a resource, a district policy manual on safety has its limitations. The principal needs an expert district staff person and/or persons to assist in the interpretation of the safety concerns. When a combination of the warning signs indicates potential violence, the district immediately must become a member of the local school team.

We all realize that a safe school environment is essential to learning. As principals, we feel more empowered when we realize that emotional and physical safety can be achieved when it is part of the shared vision of the school and the community. As school leaders, our responsibility is to be leaders and facilitators so that all school citizens can work and learn in a safe school environment.

[about the author]

JOHN H. DALY is currently on leave from his principal's position in the Madison Metropolitan School District and is a Senior Training and Research Specialist at the Comprehensive Center Region VI.

BEST PRACTICES: THE PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVENESS

[eva s. kubinski]

ON JUNE 1, 1998, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ENACTED A NEW REQUIREMENT FOR PROGRAMS FUNDED UNDER TITLE IV OF THE IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOLS ACT (IASA). ALL PROGRAMS THAT RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THE SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES ACT, INCLUDING VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAMS, ARE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW THE *PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVENESS*.

WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVENESS?

The *Principles of Effectiveness* are a series of requirements designed to guide the use of funds allocated under Title IV, also known as the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Community Act. Their purpose is to increase the potential effectiveness of programs and activities funded with the limited Title IV monies available from the U.S. Department of Education. These *Principles* will be used in conjunction with the existing Title IV statutes and regulations. They affect programs and funds at the state education agency, local education agency, tribal school, Governor's Office, and community organization levels.

WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES?

PRINCIPLE 1:
A grant recipient shall base its program on a thorough assessment of objective data about the drug and violence problems in the schools and communities served.

PRINCIPLE 1 is intended to help schools and districts determine their needs prior to planning and implementing their programs. Through an examination of objective data, school staff should focus their efforts and funds in the most effective manner. A solid needs assessment helps to prevent duplication of effort and develop new linkages among school programs, community groups, and organizations.

PRINCIPLE 2:
A grant recipient shall, with the assistance of a local or regional advisory council, which includes community representatives, establish a set of measurable goals and objectives, and design its activities to meet those goals and objectives.

The purpose of **PRINCIPLE 2** is to help schools and districts set reasonable, measurable goals and objectives. These goals and objectives should be based upon the information obtained by the needs assessment and should be developed with input from an advisory council. The goals and objectives will provide the "road map" for activity and program planning, as well as the standard against which to compare the success or failure of the program upon evaluation. In general, it is advisable to have a broad goal and several specific, measurable objectives.

PRINCIPLE 3:
A grant recipient shall design and implement its activities based on research or evaluation that provides evidence that the strategies used prevent or reduce drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior.

PRINCIPLE 3 may have the greatest impact on existing Title IV programs. While there are many programs addressing drug use and violence prevention, most have not been proven to be effective. Rather than spend money on a program without evidence of effectiveness, schools and districts should focus on the empirical evidence that supports their choice of a program. **PRINCIPLE 3** also holds schools or districts accountable for the results.

PRINCIPLE 3 affects two kinds of programs. If a program is considered to be a "program for youth," e.g., it is used with students via the delivery of lessons or a curriculum, it is held to a different standard than if it is a "program not directly serving youth." Programs for youth can be funded with Title IV monies only if they have been demonstrated to be effective in preventing or reducing the use of drugs or alcohol, reducing violent or disruptive behavior, or if the program modified behaviors or attitudes shown to be precursor or risk factors for drug use or violence. If such a program is chosen, it must be implemented *with fidelity* to the original design.

"Programs not directly serving youth" still need to meet the requirements of Title IV and the *Principles of Effectiveness*. They should be based on best practices, but do not have to be research-based programs. However, school staff need to evaluate the success of the program and are encouraged to identify youth-related measures of success. Examples of programs that do not serve youth directly could include teacher training or parent involvement programs, if they meet the needs specified in the goals and objectives developed by the school's advisory group.

How should educators use these principles of effectiveness if they have worked with a program that does not have data to support the belief that it is effective? If there are indications that the program

may be effective or shows signs of promise, that program can be funded with Title IV monies for up to two years. However, at the end of the two-year period, the school or district must demonstrate that the program was effective in changing behavior, modifying attitudes, or preventing actual drug/alcohol use or violence. If these data are not available, the school or district must choose another program with more solid evidence of effectiveness.

PRINCIPLE 4:

A grant recipient shall evaluate its program periodically to assess its progress toward achieving its goals and objectives and use its evaluation results to refine, improve, and strengthen its program and to refine its goals and objectives as appropriate.

The purpose of **PRINCIPLE 4** is to help schools and districts determine the effectiveness of the programs they select and to see if their goals and objectives have been met. If the goals and objectives have not been met, the evaluation can provide useful information as staff improve the program. Evaluation information may also be required at certain times by state education agencies to document progress.

The main goal of the evaluation component is to help schools and community groups serving children funded under Title VI determine how closely they meet their objectives and program goals. Assessment information can be used to adjust the program's direction, including possible adjustment of a school or district's goals and objectives, or even the type of activities or programs that have been implemented. However, if a program cannot demonstrate positive change or improvement, then Title IV monies cannot be used to fund that program.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The *Principles of Effectiveness* were developed to help schools use prevention monies in a more effective manner. This review is limited; there is much more information staff need to properly implement the *Principles*. For further information, school staff should consult the resource and reference list provided below, contact their state education agency, or contact the Comprehensive Center in their region. One of the main priorities of the U.S. Department of Education is to make schools safe and free from the influence of drugs and alcohol. By implementing programs in the most effective manner possible, children stand a better chance at staying safe and drug-free.

RESOURCES & REFERENCES

Assessment Tools. From *An Accountability Notebook for Planning*. Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations.
http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu/account.pdf

Campus Performance Objectives. STAR Center.
http://www.starcenter.org/pdf/toolkitpart2.pdf

Comprehensive Assessment of Strengths and Needs. STAR Center.
http://www.starcenter.org/pdf/toolkitpart2.pdf

Final Principles of Effectiveness (Announcement). Federal Register.
http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/1998-2/060198c.pdf

Nonregulatory guidance for implementing the DFSCA principles of effectiveness. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/nrgfin.pdf

Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program Homepage. United States Department of Education.
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/index.html

Setting Benchmarks. (1997). In *An accountability notebook for planning*. Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations.
http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu/account.pdf

REFORM TALK: DEALING WITH STUDENT CRISES & BEHAVIOR

[kent d. peterson]

EDUCATORS AND PARENTS ALIKE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY AND STUDENT VIOLENCE. IN THIS ARTICLE WE WILL LOOK AT WAYS TO SHAPE SCHOOLS WHERE QUALITY LEARNING IS ENCOURAGED, SAFETY IS NOT A CONCERN, AND VIOLENCE IS AVOIDED. TO DO THIS EDUCATORS SHOULD CONSIDER BUNDLING POSITIVE CULTURES AND CLIMATES, ENSURING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS, AND DEVELOPING APPROACHES TO COPING WITH CRISES.

BUILD POSITIVE CULTURES, CLIMATES, & EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Most writers find that unsafe schools are often also places where the culture and climate for students is negative, oppressive, and based on fear (Zummo, 1998). In these schools, one often finds autocratic educators, student alienation, uninspired teaching, and a lack of school spirit and identification. These schools are often toxic to teachers as well as students (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Toxic school cultures, combined with ineffective instructional programs that do not motivate or engage students in meaningful learning, are a dangerous mix that can foster student misbehavior. Thus, one of the first things a school must do is to make the culture one of respect, fairness, and attention to the needs and concerns of students while increasing the quality of teaching so that students are engaged in learning, excited, and motivated.

APPROACHES FOR COPING WITH CRISES

One of the more thoughtful approaches to preventing and dealing with serious behavioral problems in schools comes from Gilliam (1993). In his model, he notes a number of actions educators can take to help reduce crises. He suggests that educators should:

- **STATE DISCIPLINE RULES ABOUT AGGRESSION CLEARLY TO FOSTER TRUST AND A SENSE OF SAFETY.**
- **ESTABLISH CONSEQUENCES AND PROCESSES AHEAD OF TIME SO EVERYONE KNOWS THEM.**
- **DEAL WITH INFRACTIONS UNEMOTIONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY.**
- **AVOID MAKING UNREASONABLE THREATS OR BECOMING ENMESHED IN POWER STRUGGLES WITH STUDENTS.**
- **MAKE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS CLEAR AND CHECK THAT STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THEM.**
- **REMAIN CALM AND COMPOSED EVEN IN STRESSFUL SITUATIONS.**
- **FOCUS ON THE BEHAVIOR, NOT THE INDIVIDUAL OR THE REASONS PROVIDED FOR BREAKING THE RULES.**
- **DO NOT ARGUE WITH STUDENTS OVER THE RULES OR THE CONSEQUENCES; AVOID TRYING TO HAVE "THE LAST WORD."**
- **ALWAYS TRY TO INTERVENE WITH THE BEHAVIOR BEFORE CONFLICT DEVELOPS (GILLIAM, 1993, IN ZUMMO, 1998)**

By establishing a culture and climate that is positive and supportive of student respect and learning, schools can become places where students feel connected. Additionally, educators should make their procedures, consequences, and actions clear, respectful, and professional.

[about the author]

KENT D. PETERSON is a Senior Training and Research Specialist for the Comprehensive Center Region VI and Professor of Educational Administration, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

USEFUL MATERIALS & REFERENCES

Deal, T. E. & Peterson, K. D. (1998). *Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Gilliam, J. E. (1993). Crisis management for students with emotional/behavioral problems. *Intervention In School and Clinic, 28(4)*, 224-230.

Peterson, K. D. (1998, October). Establishing effective schoolwide behavior management and discipline systems. *Reform Talk*. Madison, WI: Comprehensive Center Region VI, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin—Madison.

Zummo, S. R. (1998). *Warning! Schools may be hazardous to your health*. Unpublished Manuscript. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin.

TARGET 8: CREATING NETWORKS OF COALITIONS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE

AN INNOVATIVE COLLABORATION—COMBINED WITH THE DETERMINATION TO QUELL THE EMERGENCE OF YOUTH GANGS AND RELATED VIOLENCE IN RURAL MICHIGAN—SPURRED PROFESSORS PHYLLIS CLEMENS NODA AND GERALD LAWVER OF EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY TO DEVELOP THREE BROADBASED PROGRAMS THAT DRAW UPON THE COMBINED RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE OF EDUCATORS, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS. DR. NODA, WHO DIRECTS THE COMPREHENSIVE CENTER-REGION VI FIELD OFFICE AT EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY (EMU), AND LAWVER, DIRECTOR OF EMU'S PUBLIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM, BEGAN IN 1997 TO EXPLORE THE POTENTIAL OF CROSS-COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO COMBAT THE PROBLEMS OF YOUTH GANGS AND VIOLENCE IN MICHIGAN'S RURAL COMMUNITIES.

In their painstaking initial work with focus groups, Noda and Lawver discovered that although small, rural communities in southeast Michigan were aware of the emerging problem of youth gangs and related violence, their efforts were frequently sporadic and lacked purposeful linkages through which significant data could be shared. In addition, existing programs often suffered from the lack of strategic plans without which they could not be assured of success.

As the first stage in their program development process, EMU's CC Field Office and Public Safety Administration Program targeted 45 small, rural communities across southeast lower Michigan as potential participants in a coordinated effort to stem the spread of youth gangs and violence. This first phase, Project First Step, developed a set of criteria to use to select potential partners. A critical consideration was the willingness of police departments, school districts, and community organizations to work together in a zero-tolerance initiative directed toward youth gangs and violence.

Fifteen community teams participated in an EMU-sponsored workshop during the Spring of 1997 during which they learned how to conduct needs assessments for their individual communities—and developed activities based on those needs. Following a review of the assessments and activities developed by these teams, the EMU Public Safety Administration Program narrowed its focus to choose seven community partners who then participated in Project First Step in the Summer of 1997.

These community partners focused on intervention strategies, substance abuse education for families, youth activities, and gang resistance education—all tailored to their specific, individualized community needs. At the same time, approximately 1,500 students were the recipients of direct services provided by the seven-community teams.

In the Summer of 1998, Target 8 Coalition Project—an outgrowth of Project First Step—built upon the successful foundation already established. In particular, Target 8 based its efforts on the cross-team expertise that had developed the previous summer in Project First Step and on the multidimensional set of strategies the seven-community teams had developed to meet their individual needs.

[about the author]

TAKEN FROM the *Final Evaluation Report* of Eastern Michigan University's Target 8 Community Coalition Project, Summer 1998, by Phyllis Clemens Noda.

Adding an eighth community partner, each of the communities implemented programs tailored to their needs. These programs were multidimensional, imaginative, and collaborative between communities. In total, the Target 8 Community Coalition Project served 2,734 children and youth deemed at risk of participation in gangs and/or violence. And although the communities and populations served could not be considered urban, they reflected the cultural, racial, and economic diversity of the target region — ranging from severely disadvantaged to affluent youth and from rural and small suburban communities to small urban cities.

A SAMPLE OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES FROM TARGET 8 FOLLOWS:

In Adrian, Michigan, the 1998 Adrian Summer Community Program for Youth broadened its "I Obey The Law" program, focusing on parental involvement, parent effectiveness training, and a DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) instructional unit at the elementary and middle school level during summer school. If first-time offenders were willing to participate in the "I Obey the Law" program, they had a positive alternative to adjudication for curfew violation citations, vandalism, and minor assaults. Participating youth

entered into a behavior modification program, complete with a contract barring them from unlawful activities. First-time offenders were referred to the Adrian Target-8 Project through Probate Court.

BELLEVILLE, SUMPTER, AND VAN BUREN "COLLABORATION WITHIN A COLLABORATION." These three communities served a total of 970 students and youth grades K-12. Detective Steven Chung, now a staff member with the EMU CC-VI Field Office, led the coordination of Sumpter Township activities with the cooperation of other law enforcement officers from the participating communities. Unique features of this tri-city consortium included a Target 8 Summer Computer Camp in Belleville which saw 30 high-needs youth building computers from the bottom up, yielding fully operational computers. These computers are now installed and are functioning as part of the after-school homework and tutoring center which is sponsored by the police and school district. In Sumpter Township, youth leadership development focused on employment and employment skills training, project-based learning, and the creation of a local radio station for youth broadcasts with limited-range frequency band operation.

In total, the Target 8 Community Coalition Project served 2,734 children and youth deemed at risk of participation in gangs and/or violence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE TARGET 8 COMMUNITY COALITION PROJECT, PLEASE CONTACT:

Phyllis Clemens Noda, Ed.D., Director
Comprehensive Center Region-VI Field Office
Eastern Michigan University • 217 New Alexander
Ypsilanti, MI 48197 • Phone: 734.487.0370
Web: www.ceac-emu.org/

FROM THE DIRECTOR

[continued from page 1]

The research is also quite clear that female, minority, and gay students are the targets of a disproportionate amount of harassment and violence, both in and out of school. A data-driven program, as recommended by the Principles of Effectiveness, would suggest that violence prevention programs should pay special attention to the needs of these students.

As Kent Peterson points out in his article, school safety entails more than the absence of violence. Schools and classrooms should be places where students are safe to take intellectual risks, where students can make and learn from their mistakes, and where they treat one another respectfully. In unpublished data gathered by the School Transition Study of the MacArthur Network on Successful Pathways through Middle Childhood, my colleagues and I found that the nature of the classroom environment was the most important factor—even more important than the kind of instruction that was delivered—in determining whether primary-aged children were engaged in the academic substance of their lessons. Children who were in classrooms where students and teachers treated and listened to one another respectfully were highly engaged in their reading, mathematics, and language arts lessons; in those classrooms where people treated each other disrespectfully, such as raising voices or engaging in ad hominem statements, children were disengaged.

The CC's mission is focused on improving achievement for *all* students. School safety is a critical factor in achieving that goal. Any IASA-funded school and district needing technical assistance in this area should contact the Center to request our services.

NEWSLETTER DEVELOPMENTS

This issue of the CC-VI newsletter ushers in a changed look and feel, as well as a change in its editorship. Eileen Kaiser, founding editor, will dedicate her time and efforts to helping schools improve their reading programs. She coordinates the Center's participation in the Reading Success Network, which will be featured in a later newsletter issue; provides ongoing, in-depth technical assistance to a Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program school; and is collaborating with Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) Principal Investigator Elizabeth Sulzby and the CSRD school on developing some training videos involving the teaching of reading to primary-aged English-language learners.

Anne Turnbaugh Lockwood, an award-winning author who has written extensively on a range of educational topics, assumes the newsletter editorship. Her interview with Harvard professor and violence prevention expert Deborah Prothrow-Stith shows how violence is also a major health issue for today's young people.

Special thanks to Kristen Roderick, IMDC Graphics, for the design of this newsletter.

[about the author]

WALTER G. SECADA is Director of the Comprehensive Center Region VI and Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

PLANNING TOOL FOR SCHOOL STAFF: ENSURING SAFETY IN YOUR SCHOOL & DISTRICT

THE FOLLOWING TOOL IS INTENDED TO GUIDE THE PLANNING OF SCHOOL LEADERS AND STAFF AS THEY WORK TO ENSURE SAFE SCHOOLS FOR ALL STUDENTS, SCHOOL CITIZENS, PARENTS, AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS.

STRATEGIC PLANS FOR SCHOOL SAFETY

		Completely implemented	*To some extent*	*In development*	*Not at all*
1.	My school or district has a strategic plan in place that includes the warning signals of violence, in which ways they should be considered, what actions should be taken, and at what times.	❑	❑	❑	❑
2.	My school or district has a team composed of school staff, students if age appropriate, law enforcement personnel, community members, parents, and other educational stakeholders that meets regularly to discuss issues related to school safety and violence prevention/reduction.	❑	❑	❑	❑
3.	Professional development in my school or district focuses on issues related to school safety, violence prevention/reduction, and is in-depth and sustained rather than sporadic.	❑	❑	❑	❑
4.	Each staff member in my school or district has a contingency plan in place should violence or disruption erupt in one of our classrooms or on school grounds.	❑	❑	❑	❑
5.	My school or district has procedures in place to ensure that local law enforcement personnel are kept appraised of school and/or district safety plans as well as reports of disruptive or violent incidents.	❑	❑	❑	❑

VIOLENCE PREVENTION/REDUCTION

		Completely implemented	*To some extent*	*In development*	*Not at all*
1.	My school or district has a violence prevention/reduction curriculum in place that is integrated throughout content areas at all grade levels.	❑	❑	❑	❑
2.	My school or district has a positive ethos and climate that recognizes student contributions toward making the school a safe and productive learning place.	❑	❑	❑	❑
3.	My [illegible] professional development in violence prevention/ reduction for all school staff.	❑	❑	❑	❑
4.	Staff at my school or in my district know the warning signs of potential violence and consult calmly but immediately with other staff—or contact local authorities—if these warning signs are present.	*Always* ❑	*To some extent* ❑	*In development* ❑	*Not at all* ❑

		Always	To some extent	In development	Not at all
5.	At the individual level, professional development in my school or district has sensitized me to my own anger and ways of dealing with conflict.	❑	❑	❑	❑

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION

		Always	To some extent	In development	Not at all
1.	My school or district works actively to engage community organizations, parents, and law enforcement personnel in the strategic planning process to ensure school safety in my community.	❑	❑	❑	❑
2.	My school or district has a team composed of community members, parents, law enforcement personnel, and other educational stakeholders that meets regularly to discuss ongoing issues related to school safety and violence prevention/reduction.	Completely implemented ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑
3.	The school board in my community regularly discusses violence prevention and reduction in a proactive, rather than reactive, manner.	Always ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑
4.	As a teacher or administrator, I find ways to infuse the awareness of violence and the ways in which it can escalate into my daily lesson plans in ways that do not frighten students but are age-appropriate and develop their awareness of our violent society.	Always ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑
5.	The material that I teach in my classroom de-emphasizes violence as a solution to everyday problems and seeks positive solutions to the resolution of conflict.	Always ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑

COLLABORATIVE VIOLENCE PREVENTION/REDUCTION

		Always	To some extent	In development	Not at all
1.	The staff in my school or district works to make school safety a positive issue, rather than something negative and frightening to students, staff, and other educational stakeholders.	❑	❑	❑	❑
2.	My school or district recognizes that we need the cooperation of law enforcement personnel, community agencies and organizations, parents, and other educational stakeholders—and has a proactive plan to secure their collaboration.	Always ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑
3.	If I have concerns about school safety, my school or district has ensured that I know at least two individuals outside my school environment that I can call for help and advice.	Completely implemented ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑
4.	Suggestions from community groups, law enforcement personnel, and other educational stakeholders regarding school safety are taken seriously and encouraged in my school or district.	Always ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑
5.	The staff in my school or district work to make the school a calm place where learning can take place undisturbed by bullying, harassment, or other indicators of potential violence.	Always ❑	To some extent ❑	In development ❑	Not at all ❑

[how do I apply?]

TO RECEIVE AN APPLICATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE:

Comprehensive Center—Region VI
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1025 W. Johnson Street ○ Madison, WI 53706

E-MAIL:
cc6@mail.wcer.wisc.edu
(mention the CCII institute in the subject line)

TELEPHONE:
(888) 212-7713 or (608) 263-4220

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT CCI, PLEASE VISIT:
http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/Completed/Imagine/index.htm

[upcoming CC-VI events]

TO SEE A LIST OF UPCOMING EVENTS,
VISIT THE CC-VI CALENDAR AT:

http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/cc6/Calendar_of_Services.html

[summer institutes]

The Comprehensive Center will be holding a series of summer institutes for principals and teachers on a range of topics. For further information, please refer to the CCVI calendar.

[learn more about CC-VI staff]

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE VARIOUS CC STAFF WHO HAVE WRITTEN ARTICLES FOR THIS NEWSLETTER, VISIT THE CC-VI WEBSITE AT:

http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/cc6/cc_of_Services.html

[for technical assistance]

PLEASE CONTACT THE CC-VI BY PHONE:
(888) 212-7713 or (608) 263-4220

FAX:
(608) 263-3731

E-MAIL:
cc6@mail.wcer.wisc.edu

WEB:
http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/cc6/

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COMPREHENSIVE CENTER REGION-VI

[Director]

[Associate Researcher/Editor]

The Comprehensive Center Region VI is administered by the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison and funded by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education. Any opinions, findings, or recommendations are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Education.

THE COMPREHENSIVE CENTER-REGION VI ANNOUNCES

THE CGI INSTITUTE

[August 1 - 5, 1999]

MADISON, WISCONSIN

[what is CGI?]

[why teach using CGI?]

[what should participants expect?]

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THE REGION VI COMPREHENSIVE CENTER FIELD SITES

THE MISSION OF THE CENTERS, UNDER THE IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOL ACT (IASA), IS TO EMPOWER SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR ALL CHILDREN. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE COMPREHENSIVE CENTERS IS DRIVEN BY THE NEEDS OF THE STATES AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND BY THE NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN THY SERVE. THE CENTER SERVES IOWA, MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA, NORTH DAKOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA, AND WISCONSIN.

[Subcontract/Field Sites]

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